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LB 1070

approximately \$55 million a year that the nursing homes will...have agreed to take a \$10,000 handling fee, and this is the nursing homes, the public nursing homes, a \$10,000 handling fee on this money, and then pass through, that money, through the nursing homes into state government. And it's legal, that was my first question. It's condoned more or less by the federal government, and it is even expressly allowed by the federal government. These are all questions that I asked on 1070, when I first heard that this mechanism was going to be utilized by the state of Nebraska to, in essence, build a large fund that is approximately \$130 million, if you'll look at the fiscal note, the first year, and about \$55 million every year thereafter. So it's a very large fund of millions and millions and hundreds of millions of dollars that will be coming into the state of Nebraska. And what that was in the original 1070, what it was going to be used for was for grant money to build, you could build from the ground up, to add on, or to change nursing home facilities, of which we have an overabundance of in the state of Nebraska, regardless of certificate of need. We have an overabundance of nursing home beds and rooms, and they were going to change those into assisted living with this money. They were even going to, in the original 1070, give this money to for-profit entities, and they were also going to take 25 million of this money and use it for the state's portion of the kid care health care plan. When I first heard this, I had a number of concerns that this money was being taken from taxpayers in this fashion, and it was a mechanism that I doubt very many taxpayers would be aware of, and I'm not sure how many would approve or disapprove of it, but it definitely was disingenuous that they were paying tax dollars to the federal government; the federal government was paying those tax dollars to the state of Nebraska to pay for the care of those individuals that are already under the Medicare plans in the nursing homes across the state of Nebraska, but it would be used for at the end of this whole mechanism whatever the state of Nebraska wanted to use it for. And we did discuss whether that money should stay into health care in committee; we discussed, well, we spent a lot of time discussing the bill on who would get the money, how it would be distributed, what that areas, and that's why we had a significant committee amendment that came out of the Health Committee at that point in time. I had always had some objection to utilizing taxpayer dollars in this way and